

Confidence (*Saddhā* = ສັດທາ) in the Buddha's Enlightenment

Saddhā in Buddhism means confidence or faith in what the Buddha realized (*Saddahati tathāgatassa bodhiṃ*). As the result of listening to Dhamma and understanding Dhamma we are confident in the Buddha's enlightenment, his message and his noble disciples.

The more we understand the Dhamma, the more we confident in the Buddha.

“Yo dhammaṃ passati so maṃ passati, Yo maṃ passati so dhammaṃ passati.”

“He who sees the dhamma sees me (the Buddha). He who sees me (the Buddha) sees the dhamma.”

Finally, we confident in the essence of the Dhamma which is the dependent origination; *Paticcasamuppada*. That's why it is said as;

“Yo paticcasamuppādaṃ passati so dhammaṃ passati,

Yo dhammaṃ passati so paticcasamuppādaṃ passati.”

“He who sees the dependent origination sees the dhamma. He who sees the dhamma sees the dependent origination.”

Accordingly, this understanding helps us to be confident in the Sangha too, because the follow the dhamma. Consequently, the bridge that connects the Buddha and the Sangha is dhamma or ‘*Saddhā*’.

Confidence is the foundation of the all-wholesome activities (*Saddhā mulikā sabbepi kusalā dhammā*). If a person becomes *Saddhā*, he performs a lot of merits (*Saddho Kulaputto bahuṃ punnaṃ pasavati*). Therefore, *Saddhā* is frequently emphasized in Buddhism.

Saddhā is the seed (*saddhā bijam*), the initiator, and thus the source at the beginning.

Saddhā is the hand that takes up all the advantageous of mental states.

Saddhā is the wealth (*saddhā dhanam*) above all, since it brings real and lasting happiness.

Saddhā is the jump (*saddhāya taratī ogham*), since it enables beings to cross the flood of pain.

Saddhā is the purifier, since it cleans pollutions of the mind.

Saddhā is a spiritual faculty (*Saddhā indriya*).

Saddhā is a power (*Saddhā bala*)

When we associate with someone or practice something, first of all, we should have a confidence in that person or thing. That is ‘*Saddhā*’, confidence or faith. This is the opposite of doubt (*vicikicchā*). If we doubt any thing or person, we have no progress in our activities. Therefore, firstly, we should overcome doubt for the success of anything in our lives.

The faithful person has three characteristics which are;

1. Desire to see virtuous persons
2. Desire to listen to Dhamma
3. Desire to practice generosity

*“Dassanakāmo silavataṃ saddhammaṃ sotumicchati,
Vineyye maccheramaṃ sa ve saddho’ti vuccati.”*

Before the Siddhartha Bodhisathava attained enlightenment, when practice some teaching under the guidance of Ālārakālāma, the Buddha says “Ālārakālāma had confidence, I also had confidence”. And, the Bodhisatva says “Uddakarāmaputta had confidence, I also had confidence” (Ariyapariyesana Sutta, MN1). Here confidence refers the trust in what they practice. That’s a very important quality which we should have at the beginning of the path.

Saddhā in Buddhism consists with five areas;

1. Confidence in the Buddha (Buddha’s enlightenment)
2. Confidence in the Dhamma (Buddha’s teaching)
3. Confidence in the Sangha (Buddha’s noble disciples)
4. Confidence in the Training (*Sikkhā*)
5. Confidence in the Dependent Origination (*Paticcasamuppāda*)

When we are confident in what we know, we are energetic to practice it. That energy influences our entire body and mind like an electricity. Then mindfulness, concentration and wisdom gradually increase according to our courage and spiritual faculties that we have practiced in our previous lives.

According to Kītāgiri Sutta, the Buddha explains that Saddhā plays a main role in the path of liberation. The path of liberation starts with Saddhā, and it will end with wisdom.

1. One who is confident in a teacher visits the teacher (*saddhā jāto upasaṃkamati*).
2. When he visits, he attends to the teacher constantly (*upasaṃkamtivā pairupāsati*).
3. Then he lends his ear (*pairupāsanto sotaṃ odahati*).
4. And he listens to Dhamma (*ohitasoto dhammaṃ suṇāti*).
5. Having listened to Dhamma, he remembers what he learned (*sutvā dhammaṃ dāreti*).
6. Further he reflects on its meaning (*datānaṃ dhammānaṃ attamaṃ upaparikkhati*).
7. While reflecting on the meaning, he gains a reflective acceptance of those teachings (*atthamaṃ upaparikkhanto dhamma nijjhānā khamanti*).
8. With reflective acceptance he makes an effort (*dhammanijjhānākkhantiyā sati chando jāyati*)
9. Having made the effort he weights it up (*chandajāto ussahati*)

10. Next having weighted it up he attempts to go on the path (*ussahitvā tuleti*)

11. Being self-resolute he realizes with his person the highest truth itself (*ñāṇa* - knowledge)

(*tulayitvā padayati*)

12. And, penetrating it by means of wisdom, he sees the supreme truth as it is

(*pahitatto samāno kayena ceva paramasacchaṃ sacchikaroti paññāya ca naṃ pativijjhā passati*).

Confidence in the triple gem helps who practices dhamma from the beginning to the end of the path of liberation. The triple gem is like a light which illumines (lights up / shines) the path.

Saddhā has two major characteristics which are;

1. *Saddahana lakkhaṇa* – the characteristic of trust
2. *Sampasādana lakkhaṇa* – The characteristic of tranquility.

Until we attain some levels, we have confidence in that. After we attain it, confidence is over. Then we have no more confidence.

When the Buddha was alive, Chitta Gahapati was asked a question by Nigaṇṭhanāthaputta whether he is confident in Jhāna or concentration without vitakka & vicāra or the cessation of vitakka & vicāra. Then Citta Gahapati said that I have no more confidence in those Jhānas since I have already experienced them (Nigaṇṭha Sutta, SN4). Actually, here Nigaṇṭhanāthaputta asks him about the second Jhana experience. He says here that he has overcome confidence in the second Jhana because of his own experience. However, further, he is pleasant to the Buddha who introduced this path. After the experience we overcome the characteristic of believing of Saddhā (*saddahana lakkhana*), but the characteristic of being pleasant of Saddhā (*sampasādana lakkhana*) has been further remained.



May the Triple Gem Bless you!

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